REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated September 15, 2005. Claims 1-46 were pending. By this Amendment, new dependent claims 47 and 48 have been added. Accordingly, claims 1-48 are now pending, with claims 1, 5, 9, 12, 15, 20, 23, 28, 31, 35 and 39 being in independent form.

Claims 1-46 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable by U.S. Patent No. 6,665,425 to Sampath et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,405,178 to Manchala et al.

This application relates to monitoring status of usage of a consumable products (such as toner, ink, etc.) and monitoring maintenance components, used in a communications terminal apparatus or image forming apparatus. Conventional apparatuses which have automatic monitoring of consumable products and maintenance components typically also provide for automatic ordering of the consumable product or repair service. Such conventional apparatuses do not provide notice to a manager of the apparatus of the depleted status of the consumable products or defective status of the maintenance component.

This application is directed to notifying a manager who supervises the apparatus, using the registered electronic communications address of the manager, when the consumable product in the apparatus needs refill or when a maintenance component in the apparatus needs repair or replacement. For example, claims 1, 9, 15, 23, 31 and 39 provide for automatically detecting a status of usage of a consumable product in the apparatus, sending a request (which identifies the apparatus, the specification of the consumable product, and the service depot) for supplying the consumable product to a manager who supervises the apparatus when the detector detects that the consumable product is nearly ended, using the registered electronic communications address of the manager, and sending a report to the manager when the detector detects that the consumable product is refilled. Claims 5, 12, 20, 28, 35 and 39 provide for automatically detecting an event

indicative of a defect in a maintenance component in the apparatus, sending a request (identifying the apparatus, the event, and the service depot) for repair service to the manager and the service depot using the respectively registered electronic communications addresses when the detector detects the event, and sending a report for reporting a completion of the repair service on the apparatus when the detector detects no defect of the maintenance component.

Sampath, as understood by Applicant, is directed to diagnosis and remediation of image quality in a document processing system, through a diagnostic inference engine which is invoked by the user when the user is not satisfied with the system's performance.

As acknowledged in the Office Action, Sampath does not find teach or suggest (A) automatically detecting a status of usage of a consumable product being used in the apparatus, as provided by claims 1, 9, 15, 23, 31 and 39, and (B) automatically detecting an event indicative of a defect in a maintenance component being used in the apparatus, as provided by claims 5, 12, 20, 28, 35 and 39.

Further, since the diagnostics process of Sampath is triggered by a user, Sampath teaches that the results or a report of the diagnostics are provided to the user through a user interface.

Sampath does not teach or suggest (a) sending a request (which identifies the apparatus, the specification of the consumable product, and the service depot) for supplying the consumable product to a manager who supervises the apparatus, using the registered electronic communications address of the manager, and sending a report to the manager when the detector detects that the consumable product is refilled, as provided by claims 1, 9, 15, 23, 31 and 39, and (b) sending a request (identifying the apparatus, an event indicative of a defect in a maintenance component, and the service depot) for repair service to the manager and the service depot using the respectively registered electronic communications addresses when the detector detects the event, and sending a report for reporting a completion of the repair service on the apparatus when

the detector detects no defect of the maintenance component, as provided by claims 5, 12, 20, 28, 35 and 39.

Manchala, as understood by Applicant, is directed to a computer system for managing an inventory of consumables for a fleet of printers and similar machines, to maintain a comfortable inventory level. More specifically, the system tracks the consumables in inventory. When inventory is low an order for replacement is automatically placed.

Manchala, like Sampath does not teach or suggest, however, (a) sending a request (which identifies the apparatus, the specification of the consumable product, and the service depot) for supplying the consumable product to a manager who supervises the apparatus, using the registered electronic communications address of the manager, and sending a report to the manager when the detector detects that the consumable product is refilled, as provided by claims 1, 9, 15, 23, 31 and 39, and (b) sending a request (identifying the apparatus, an event indicative of a defect in a maintenance component, and the service depot) for repair service to the manager and the service depot using the respectively registered electronic communications addresses when the detector detects the event, and sending a report for reporting a completion of the repair service on the apparatus when the detector detects no defect of the maintenance component, as provided by claims 5, 12, 20, 28, 35 and 39.

Accordingly, for at least the above-stated reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 5, 9, 12, 15, 20, 23, 28, 31, 35 and 39, and the claims depending therefrom, are patentable over the cited art.
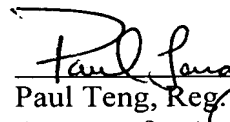
In view of the remarks hereinabove, Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant earnestly solicits the allowance of the application.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper

should be considered to be such a petition. The Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees

that may be required in connection with this amendment and to credit any overpayment to our

Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is

respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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